

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

EPISCOPAL CHURCH CENTER • 815 SECOND AVENUE • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017

Richard Henshaw, Jr., Acting Managing Editor

Telephone: (212) 867-8400

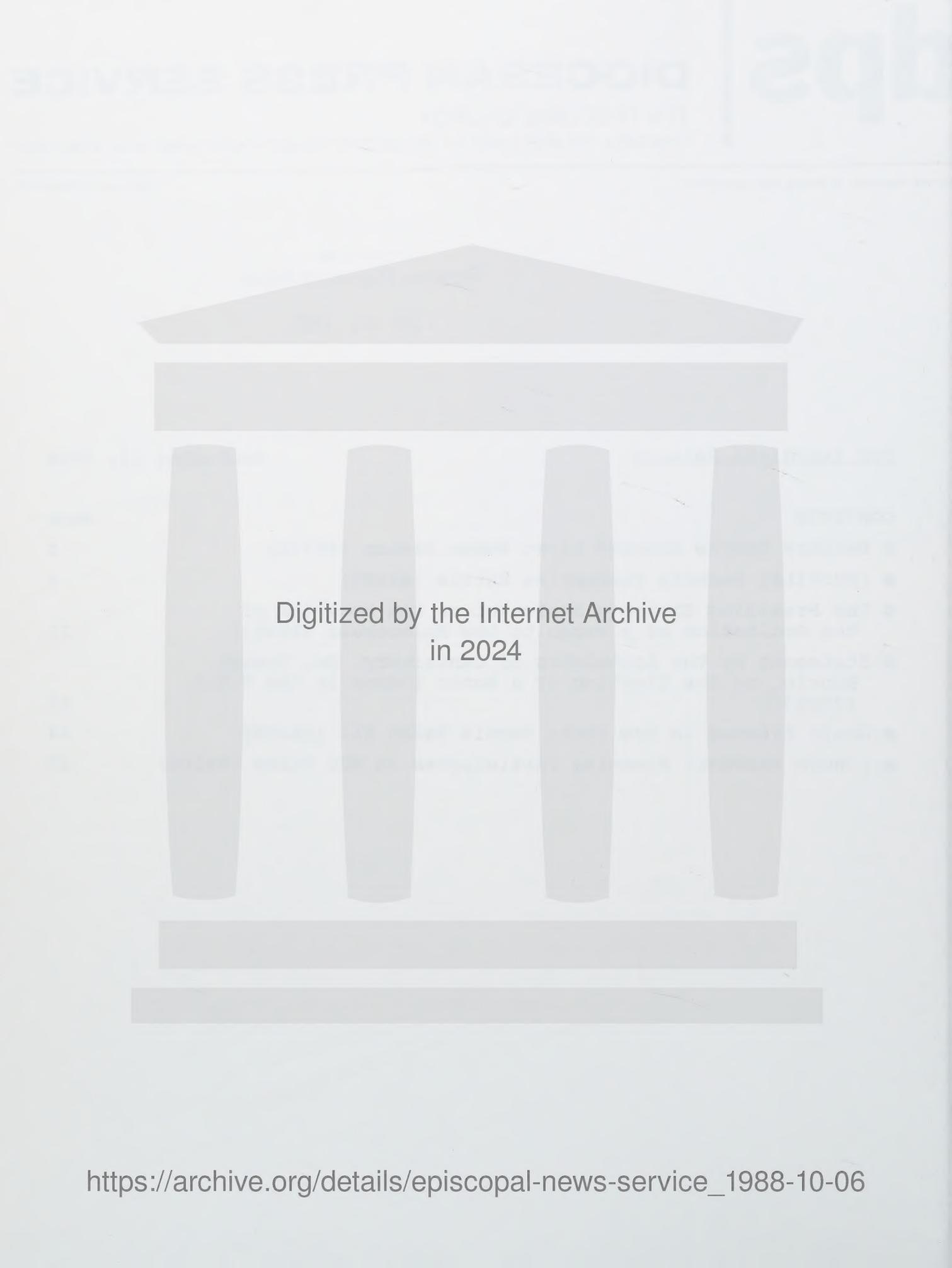
Property of
Graduate Theological Union

OCT 04 1988

For Immediate Release

September 29, 1988

CONTENTS	PAGE
■ Barbara Harris Elected First Woman Bishop (88201)	2
■ [PROFILE] Barbara Clementine Harris (88202)	9
■ The Presiding Bishop's Statement on the Occasion of the Ordination of a Woman to the Episcopate (88203)	11
■ Statement by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Robert Runcie, on the Election of a Woman Bishop in the U.S.A. (88204)	13
■ Grein Elected in New York; Dennis Taken Ill (88205)	14
■ [PHOTO FEATURE] Browning Participates in WCC Talks (88206)	17



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE/ Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

Barbara Harris Elected First Woman Bishop

DPS 88201

NEW YORK (DPS, Sept. 29) -- The first woman bishop in the Anglican Communion has been elected.

The Rev. Barbara C. Harris, 58, interim-in-charge of the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia and Executive Director of the Episcopal Church Publishing Co., is the new Suffragan Bishop-elect of Massachusetts. She was elected on the eighth ballot from among a field of six candidates on September 24 in a special convention held at St. Paul's Cathedral, Boston. [Complete vote tally follows below.]

The consecration and installation is expected to be held early next year--possibly in early February--in Boston.

Harris's principal competition throughout the election was the Rev. Marshall W. Hunt, rector of St. Anne's Lowell, Mass., and, indeed, Hunt nearly won the election on the third and fourth ballots. On the fifth and seventh ballots, however, Harris moved ahead in the clerical order, and surged ahead in both orders in the eighth.

The sixth ballot was declared invalid by the president of the convention, Bishop David E. Johnson of Massachusetts, when it was determined that there were irregularities in the balloting. Delegates throughout the convention seemed satisfied that Johnson handled this matter swiftly and thoroughly, and there appears to be no move to question the election.

In addition to Harris and Hunt, the candidates were: the Ven. Denise Haines, Archdeacon for Missions and Urban Ministry in the Diocese of Newark; the Rev. Canon Burgess Carr, Africa Partnership Officer in the World Mission office at the Episcopal Church Center; the Rev. Paul Schwenzfeier, rector of the Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan, Mass.; and the Rev. George Welles, Jr., assistant rector of St. Mary's, Barnstable, Mass.

Welles and Carr withdrew after the second and third ballots respectively.

DPS 88201/2

In nominating Harris, the Rev. Mary Glasspool, rector of St. Luke's and St. Margaret's, Boston, emphasized her 30 years in the business community, her parish service as a deacon and priest, and her work with diverse groups in the Church on a diocesan and national level.

"She may at times make us uncomfortable about the way things are, but that is precisely what Jesus did. He made the religious people of his time uncomfortable and when they responded to his vision, they did so by changing their lives," Glasspool said.

Glasspool also pointed out the opportunity for the Diocese of Massachusetts to make history. "We have a rare opportunity to be the first, with the blessing of God's Holy Spirit, to realize unity in diversity, thereby moving us all closer to the reign of God."

Bishop Johnson told a news conference after the election that Harris let out a "deep gasp of incredulity" when Johnson told her of the results. He pointed out that the diocese, largest in the Church in terms of membership, "is truly a diverse group of people" and Harris will bring special gifts to her ministry in Massachusetts. When asked about parishes in the diocese that might object to a woman as bishop, he said he "does not anticipate any split."

When the cheering had subsided after the vote was announced, Johnson asked the convention to make the election unanimous, but there was a handful of loud objections from among the 500 delegates. The bishop asked Harris supporters to "be sensitive to the feelings of others," and added that "the Communion is represented in this family in all its diversity. Unanimity was never its trademark, but unity has always been its desire."

In a statement prepared for release, Harris said she was "deeply honored" and that she "accepts with humility and thanksgiving to Almighty God the election as Bishop Suffragan."

"The significance of this election," she continued, "must be seen in its proper context, which is far broader than any attention that may be focused on me as an individual. It marks a historic

moment for the Diocese of Massachusetts, the Episcopal Church in the United States, and the worldwide Anglican Communion, as it speaks to inclusiveness in all orders of the Church's ordained ministry--deacons, priests, and now bishops."

In a sermon on the Sunday after her election, Harris told the congregation at the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia that "a fresh wind is indeed blowing. For some they are refreshing breezes. For others they are as fearsome as a hurricane."

Harris's election must now be ratified by a majority of the House of Bishops and a majority of the 118 diocesan standing committees. There are no indications that the election will be widely contested.

Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, who was in Cincinnati to consecrate the new Bishop of Southern Ohio, called attention to the historical event, and added, "For many it is the occasion of great joy and celebration. For many it is a troubling time. For all of us it is a time when we will be flooded with deep emotions. It is a time when we will test our commitment to the unity of the Church, but more especially our sensitivity to feelings and convictions of others."

[The complete text of Browning's comments follow on page 11.]

Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, in a statement released by Lambeth Palace in London, said, "The election of Barbara Harris as the Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts is an important event in the life of our Communion and in relation to other churches...[Her] consecration will have far-reaching consequences for the character of Anglicanism...The spirit of the Lambeth Conference has given all the bishops--including those against the ordination of women--the inspiration to maintain the highest possible degree of unity with those who differ. I renew the pledge I made in Canterbury to do all in my power to serve this unity as we begin to work out the implications of the Massachusetts election." [The complete text of Runcie's comments follow on page 13.]

-more-

DPS 88201/4

The Rev. Paul Washington, who as rector of the Church of the Advocate, encouraged Harris to seek ordination, said she "always had a strong sense of justice and compassion for the poor," and he described her as "extremely brilliant."

Bishop Fred Borsch of Los Angeles said: "This is an exciting event in the life of the Episcopal Church, the Anglican Communion of Churches, and the whole Church catholic throughout the world. It will be both a challenge and an opportunity for many Christians as they see the full expression of the ministry of women. I have known Barbara Harris for many years and believe she is highly qualified to be a bishop, a representative of the witness of the apostles. For a time some may find it difficult to see in her a personal side of continuity and unity in the life of the Church, but I believe that the spirit of God is giving a new gift for the understanding of the unity of all Christians and the future of the faith."

Bishop Frank Griswold of Chicago said: "It is clearly the vocation of the Anglican Communion to lead the way in integrating the gifts and graces of women into the historic three-fold ministry of bishops, priest, and deacons. I have known the Rev. Barbara C. Harris for many years and can only say that she is immensely competent, clear, and articulate in her thought and passionately committed to social justice."

Bishop Graham Leonard of London (Church of England) said the election will cause deep divisions in the Church. "In common with many other bishops, I would be unable to recognize a woman bishop or the validity of any ordinations or confirmations performed by her."

The Rev. William Rusch, Executive Director of the Office of Ecumenical Affairs, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, released a statement saying, "I welcome the news that a woman was elected Suffragan Bishop in the diocese of Massachusetts. The Episcopal Church in the U.S. has been clear for some time of its deep commitment to the equal participation of men and women in the ministry of the Church including the office of bishop. I see this as a helpful event

in the growing relationship between our two churches, and I see it as something American Lutherans will enthusiastically support."

Fr. Thaddeus Horgan, S.A., Associate Director of the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, U.S. Conference of Catholic bishops, observed: "Rome and the U.S. [Catholic] bishops have been pointing out that the real issue in our dialogue with the Episcopalians is Tradition. Now that there has been this election perhaps our dialogue should become more focused. We need to look more at Tradition [The Traditional]. We don't know whether or not Tradition allows for the ordination of women. I don't think that the election of Bishop-elect Harris will discourage our conversations. On the contrary, it highlights the necessity to focus on where those conversations should be--namely the issue of Tradition."

The possible election of a woman to the House of Bishops in the United States was a principal subject for debate at this summer's General Convention of the Episcopal Church and at the Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops from around the world. After considerable debate at General Convention in Detroit, the bicameral legislature of the Church passed a compromise resolution that will allow a bishop from outside a diocese to officiate in parishes that request an "episcopal visitor." The resolution remains in effect for six years and will expire unless renewed.

The Lambeth Conference approved a resolution urging the autonomous Anglican bodies around the world to respect one another's decisions regarding women's ordinations and consecration as bishops.

###

PHOTO CAPTION:

(88020/1) The Rev. Barbara Clementine Harris, Suffragan Bishop-elect of Massachusetts.

(88020/2) The six candidates for Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts examine egg timers given to them at the conclusion of open hearings in the diocese several days before the historic Sept. 24th election. [L-R] the Rev. Paul Schwenzfeier, the Rev. Canon

-more-

DPS 88201/6

Burgess Carr, the Rev. George Welles, Jr., the Ven. Denise Haines, the Rev. Marshall Hunt, and the Rev. Barbara Harris.

##

VOTE TALLY

Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts

September 24, 1988

[Number of votes needed in parentheses]

1ST BALLOT 2ND BALLOT
Clergy Laity Clergy Laity

	(130)	(129)	(132)	(126)
Carr	21	32	8	12
Haines	24	30	18	21
Harris	83	60	103	82
Hunt	91	64	114	100
Schwenzfeier	32	48	16	30
Welles	8	23	3	6

[Welles withdrew]

3RD BALLOT 4TH BALLOT
Clergy Laity Clergy Laity

	(135)	(133)	(136)	(127)
Carr	2	0	-	-
Haines	4	6	0	1
Harris	126	116	134	112
Hunt	130	134	133	133
Schwenzfeier	6	8	4	7
Welles	-	-	-	-

[Carr withdrew]

5TH BALLOT 6TH BALLOT
Clergy Laity [invalid]

	(136)	(127)
Carr	-	-
Haines	0	1
Harris	142	117
Hunt	126	132
Schwenzfeier	2	3
Welles	-	-

	7TH BALLOT		8TH BALLOT	
	<u>Clergy</u>	<u>Laity</u>	<u>Clergy</u>	<u>Laity</u>
Carr	(130)	(126)	(129)	(126)
Haines	-	-	-	-
Harris	0	1	0	0
Hunt	138	123	145	131
Schwenzfeier	116	123	108	116
Welles	4	3	3	3
	-	-	-	-

###

DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE/ Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

[PROFILE] Barbara Clementine Harris

DPS 88202

The Rev. Barbara Clementine Harris, D.S.T., was born June 12, 1930, in Philadelphia, Pa.

In 1954, she received a diploma from the Charles Morris School of Advertising and Journalism in Philadelphia, and from 1977 to 1979 she attended Villanova University in Villanova, Pa. She has studied in the Executive Management Program at Pennsylvania State University (1973); the Sun Institute (1975, 1977); the Urban Theology Unit, Sheffield, England (1977); and the Pennsylvania Foundation for Pastoral Counseling (1979-81).

She received an honorary Doctor of Sacred Theology degree from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in 1981.

Before entering the ordained ministry, Harris had a career as a public relations executive. She was chief operating officer of a public relations counseling organization, Joseph V. Baker Associates, Inc., Philadelphia (1958-68), and she began a 12-year period at the Sun Oil Company (later the Sun Company). She was manager and consultant in community relations (1968-72); manager for community and urban affairs (1972-73); manager for public relations (1973-77); and senior staff consultant, (1977-80).

She became a member of the Episcopal Church at a young age, and by 1968 was active at the Church of the Advocate on the north side of Philadelphia. In the 1960s, she was involved in church-related programs to register black voters in Mississippi, and in 1965 she participated in the civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Ala., that was led by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

At the Church of the Advocate, Harris served on the vestry and as a volunteer in the prison ministry. Her interest in ordained ministry increased during those years, and in 1974, she cut short a business trip to the west coast to be crucifer at the celebrated

-more-

DPS 88202/2

service for the "Philadelphia 11," in which 11 women were ordained to the priesthood without official Church authorization.

Her rector, the Rev. Paul Washington, became convinced of Harris' serious interest in seeking holy orders, and he recommended her to Bishop Lyman C. Ogilby of Pennsylvania. Ogilby ordained her deacon in September 1979 and priest in October 1980.

She returned to her home parish first as deacon intern in 1979, then as assistant in 1980, and from 1980 to 1984 she was priest-in-charge at St. Augustine of Hippo Church, Morristown, Pa. During this same period she was a chaplain in the Philadelphia County Prisons. Harris returned to the Church of the Advocate as associate in 1984, and June 1988 was appointed interim-in-charge.

In 1984, she became the Executive Director of the Episcopal Church Publishing Co., an umbrella organization that publishes The Witness, which for 70 years has been the Church's leading journal advocating peace and justice ministries. Harris has written extensively for The Witness, most notably a column entitled "A Luta Continua," an anti-Portuguese rallying cry from the Angolan guerrilla movement. It means "the struggle continues."

In recent issues her column had addressed South African terrorism, the life of Mattie Hopkins, inclusive language liturgy and human sexuality debates before General Election, educating black South Africans, and hate-group activities in the United States.

In other service, Harris has been a member of the Union of Black Episcopalians; the Task Force on Recruitment, Training, and Deployment of Black Clergy; and the Public Relations Society of America. She has served on the boards of the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass., the Pennsylvania Foundation for Pastoral Counseling, and the Seybert Institution.

Suffragan Bishop-elect Harris is divorced with no children, and makes her home in Philadelphia.

###

DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE/ Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

THE PRESIDING BISHOP'S STATEMENT
ON THE OCCASION OF
THE ORDINATION OF A WOMAN TO THE EPISCOPATE

DPS 88203

On Saturday, September 24, the Diocese of Massachusetts elected the Rev. Barbara C. Harris as Bishop. She is the first woman elected as a bishop in the Episcopal Church. This election is an historic event. The Episcopal Church has ordained women to the Sacred Order of Priests since 1977. For many it is the occasion of great joy and celebration. For many it is a troubling time. For all of us it is a time when we will be flooded with deep emotions. It is a time that will test our commitment to the unity of the Church, but more especially our sensitivity to the feelings and convictions of others. It is also a time when we must exhibit a clear commitment to the ongoing mission of Christ's Church, a commitment that must transcend our feelings about this event, however momentous it is.

As your Presiding Bishop, I would like to share with you the canonical process that follows each election to the Office of Bishop. It is this well tested process that we will faithfully carry out in the days ahead. I want to assure all those unfamiliar with the election and consecration practices in the Episcopal Church that this process is not unique to this particular event.

Experience has shown that the canonical process is not a rubber stamp. The process is not an institutional shortcut or a deterrent to prayerful, thoughtful discussion. Every episcopal election is the occasion for the Church--through the electing diocese, the Standing Committees of every diocese, and the bishops with jurisdiction--to renew its biblical, theological, and ecclesiological understanding of the apostolic ministry. This canonical process offers the Church an ongoing occasion for continuity, renewal and, if it be God's will, a reformation of its clerical leadership.

During the next days there will be many participants in the consent process. Some will be exercising their canonical responsibilities and others will be providing the context for the local decision making through the sharing of information and opinion. My role in the process as Presiding Bishop is clearly defined by the canons and I am committed to the faithful execution of this role.

There is a role for every Episcopalian and for those who join us in worshiping and serving God. Our offering will be in our prayers. This is a time for us to offer our joy, our anxiety, our commitment to unity to God in prayer. For discernment, for guidance, for patience and understanding, for God's grace that makes community

-more-

DPS 88203/2

possible and hopeful, this is a time for prayer. It is the witness and admonition to prayer that we have in the testimony and action of the Apostles. It is to prayer that I call the Episcopal Church in response to this historic action.

###

DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE/ Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

STATEMENT BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, DR. ROBERT RUNCIE,
ON THE ELECTION OF A WOMAN BISHOP IN THE U.S.A.:
24TH SEPTEMBER 1988

DPS 88204

The Election of Barbara Harris as the Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts in an important event in the life of our Communion and in relation to other Churches. Her Election now goes before the Standing Committees and Bishops of all the Dioceses of the Episcopal Church. Their consent is required before she can be consecrated. Such a consecration will have far-reaching consequences for the character of Anglicanism.

The Bishops at the Lambeth Conference gave overwhelming support to a resolution urging us to maintain courtesy and communication with any woman bishop. The Lambeth Conference also urged respect between Provinces of the Anglican Communion which come to different decisions about women bishops, while making clear that such respect and courtesy did not necessarily indicate acceptance of the principle involved in the issue. So I hope the Church of England as a whole will respect decisions of the Episcopal Church in the USA.

I know, however, there will be some in the Church of England and the Anglican Communion who feel they will not be able to recognize a woman as a bishop, or those ordained by her. But for the moment it is not for individuals to make declarations about whether they are in or out of communion with her or the Episcopal Church. Such a matter is determined by the due processes of the Church, not by private judgement--even by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In the Church of England this will mean respect for the present position of the Church as officially established by the General Synod.

All this gives great urgency to the Commission on Women and the Episcopate I have established with the other Primates, under the chairmanship of the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Rev. Robert Eames, to establish what the relationship of Provinces will be which differ in this matter. The spirit of the Lambeth Conference has given all the bishops - including those against the ordination of women - the inspiration to maintain the highest possible degree of unity with those who differ. I renew the pledge I made in Canterbury to do all in my power to serve this unity as we begin to work out the implications of the Massachusetts Election.

###

Grein Elected in New York; Dennis Taken Ill

DPS 88205

NEW YORK (DPS, Sept. 29) -- The Rt. Rev. Richard F. Grein, 55, Bishop of Kansas since 1981, has been elected Bishop Coadjutor of New York on the 10th ballot in an election that was marred by the physical collapse of one of the candidates.

Suffragan Bishop Walter D. Dennis of New York, one of the seven candidates, collapsed as he was voting on the first ballot, and was rushed to St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center. He was later admitted in stable condition to an intensive care unit, and remained in the hospital for rest and observation.

On Easter Day 1988, Dennis collapsed during a church service, and was treated in the hospital for five days for a potassium imbalance caused by stress and exhaustion. Early indications were that Dennis' latest collapse may have resulted from similar causes. Bishop Paul Moore of New York visited Dennis in the hospital during the evening balloting session, and regular reports on his condition were announced at the electing convention.

Grein's midnight victory was achieved after nearly 10 hours of balloting. On the final ballot, he received 160 clerical and 144 lay votes with 160 and 132, respectively, needed to elect. In second place on the final ballot was the Ven. Robert N. Willing, Archdeacon of the Mid-Hudson Region of the Diocese of New York since 1970. He received 108 clerical and 91 lay votes. The third surviving candidate on the final ballot was the Rev. George F. Regas, rector of All Saints' Church, Pasadena, Calif., who received 51 clerical and 28 lay votes.

Grein will automatically succeed Moore when the 69-year old prelate retires on or before his 72nd birthday. The date has not yet been announced. Grein, meanwhile, will translate from the Diocese of Kansas to the Diocese of New York, and the installation is scheduled for Jan. 7, 1989.

DPS 88025/2

Dennis, who placed second on the first ballot, withdrew before another ballot was taken, having said before the election that he would do if looked like his health would be an issue.

Grein made steady gains in both orders as the election progressed, with the exception of the fourth ballot, and was challenged thereafter only by Archdeacon Willing.

The other three candidates dropped out of the race after the fifth ballot. They were: the Rev. C. Hugh Hildesley, rector of the Church of the Heavenly Rest, New York City; the Rev. Thomas F. Pike, rector of Calvary-Holy Communion-St. George's, New York City; and the Ven. Michael S. Kendall, Archdeacon of New York City.

Willing and Kendall were nominated from the floor. The other five were named by the official diocesan Nominating Committee for Bishop Coadjutor.

Grein is a native of Minnesota, and graduated with a B.A. from Carleton College, Northfield, Minn., in 1955. He received his Master of Divinity degree from Nashotah House in 1959 and a Master of Sacred Theology degree from Nashotah House two years later. In 1982, his alma mater awarded him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree.

Grein was ordained to the diaconate and priesthood in 1959. He has been vicar of Trinity Church, Elk River, St. John's, Hassan, and Trinity Church, Becker, Minn. (1959-64); rector of St. Matthew's, Minneapolis (1964-69); rector of St. Michael & All Angels, Mission, Kans. (1974-81). He has also been an Professor of Pastoral Theology at Nashotah House (1973-74).

He has been a member of the national Church's Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, the House of Bishops Committees on Theology and on Pastoral Development, the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue, the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue, and the boards of the College of Preachers and the National Center for the Diaconate. He was recently the chair of the General Board of Examining Chaplains.

On the diocesan level, he has been a two-time deputy to General Convention and member of a host of commissions and committees,

including the Standing Committee and Commission on Ministry.

He has co-authored a course preparing young people for Holy Communion, and wrote "The Bishop and Pastoral Care" in Anglican Theology and Pastoral Care (Morehouse, 1985). He has led conferences on Christian spirituality, growth in marriage, parish renewal, theology of parish administration, and renewal of the diaconate.

Grein is married to the former Joan Atkinson, and they have four children.

###

DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE/ Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

[PHOTO FEATURE] Browning Participates in WCC Talks DPS 88206

HANOVER, West Germany (DPS, Sept. 29) -- Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning participated in this dialogue on the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women during the World Council of Churches' 39th meeting of the Central Committee here, August 10-20, 1988. With Browning (second from left) are Annathaie Abayasekar of Sri Lanka (far left), Toni Hananie of Lebanon (second from right), and Jun Sabug of the Philippines. He attended the WCC meetings in this north German city immediately after the Lambeth Conference met in Canterbury, England, for three weeks in late July and early August.

#

